

And I saw you (in the haze of my dreams) by Delirious_Insanity

Series: Tired, in more ways than one [4]

Category: Stranger Things (TV 2016)

Genre: Gen, Implied/Referenced Child Abuse

Language: English

Characters: Byers Family (Stranger Things), Dustin Henderson, Maxine "Max" Mayfield, Robin Buckley, Steve Harrington, Wheeler Family (Stranger Things)

Relationships: Robin Buckley & Steve Harrington

Status: Completed

Published: 2021-06-25

Updated: 2021-06-25

Packaged: 2022-03-31 13:35:46

Rating: General Audiences

Warnings: No Archive Warnings Apply

Chapters: 1

Words: 520

Publisher: archiveofourown.org

Summary:

He felt empty.

He thought he knew what empty was, but he realized that it wasn't true emptiness. He still felt hunger then, tired and everything.

Now he felt nothing.

Truly, utterly nothing.

And I saw you (in the haze of my dreams)

He felt empty.

He thought he knew what empty was, but he realized that it wasn't true emptiness. He still felt hunger then, tired and everything.

Now he felt nothing.

Truly, utterly nothing.

Dustin and The Party tried to go back to their own lives, but he could see the toll it took on them all. How Mike would space out, hugging El (no, Jane. She was Jane now. Jane Hopper.) tight to his body. Will developed eye bags, dark ones that never lightened. Dustin was still chipper, but Steve saw how forced it was most of the time.

Max.... Max wasn't the same. She lost her brother, someone she truly loved, when they were finally making things up. Add Hopper to that pile, she practically shut down. Lucas tried everything to help her, but he seemed just as lost as her, only being able to offer a shoulder to cry on.

Steve was.

There is no way for him to complete that sentence, because that's all he felt.

Steve was.

He cried nonstop that night, after his parents had angrily left him behind in their new car. They left bruises and a broken ankle, not caring for the cover story or the news that showed what Steve went through.

The others were about the same, some worse, some not.

No one truly knew how to move on, or help one another move forward.

Steve tried. He kept making plans for The Party, giving them the rest

of his savings to go distract themselves. He did everything in his power to take the place of Hopper, but it still wasn't enough.

He couldn't be Jane's dad, couldn't help the kids if they were in trouble. All he could do was provide an escape. And that didn't seem to help much either.

Not too long after Hoppers death, Jane and the Byers left. Moving to a town in another state. Steve couldn't remember the one.

Things continued to fall apart, people were torn and families were depressed. Nobody knew what to do with their lives.

Over the course of a year, everyone slowly moved away. The Wheelers, Hargroves, even the Hendersons. Steve found another job, working with Robin at the movie store.

Him and Robin became best friends, but he never told her the horrors that lived in his house. He never mentioned bruises or broken bones, the times he could hardly get out of bed in the morning because he hurt so much.

He knew Robin had plans after she graduated, only in a couple months. But Steve? He was staying. Just in case the Mindflayer and the Upside Down returned.

He had the slightest hope that Hopper would return, too.

So, Steve was still tired. Still drained and exhausted. But he got stronger, quicker, preparing for the worst while hoping for the best.

And, eventually, the day did come. But he was more than ready for it. What he wasn't ready for, however, was the knock on his door. Opening it, Steve fell to his knees, staring at the face he thought was gone forever.

"Can I come in?"